MARVEL

14

LGY#257

PERCY
SMITH
PEEPLES
JUNIOR
VALENZA

GHOST RIDER

PLUS! A STORY GUEST-STARRING TAEGUKGI BY TSUEI, GYADU & REBER

When innocent blood is spilled, a ***Spirit of Vengeance*** is born, and **JOHNNY BLAZE** finds himself transformed!

Marvel Comics presents...

GHOST RIDER

"Sibling Rivalry"

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PREVIOUSLY...

Johnny and exiled F.B.I. agent Talia Warroad have been tracking a demonic entity, murdering its way across the country. That entity is none other than Johnny's brother, Danny Ketch!

Danny has made a deal with a government-backed group called Infernal Labs. Their lead scientist, Dr. Diyu hopes to weaponize Danny's Spirit of Corruption. In return, she promises to set Danny free from his curse, not realizing his life may be at risk.

Johnny and Talia rush to find Danny before it's too late!

INFERNAL LABS. FOUR MONTHS AGO.

THIS IS GOING TO HURT, DANIEL.

I CAN TAKE IT.

ZEEEEEEEEEM

GOOD.

ZEEEEEEEEM

GIVE IT THIRTY SECONDS...

...AND THEN...

ZEEEEEEEEM

...LET'S IGNITE AGAIN.

ZEEEEEEEEM

ANOTHER BREATHER...

...AND LET'S IGNITE ONCE MORE.

PATIENT REPORT?

I THINK WE'D BETTER GIVE HIM A BREAK, DR. DIYU.

HEART RATE IS AT 200. TEMPERATURE AT 115. OXYGEN, 76.

GLUCOSE... 45 AND DROPPING.

LET'S GET HIM INTO A NUTRIENT-RICH BATH UNTIL HE STABILIZES.

HOW SUCCESSFUL WERE WE THIS TIME? WITH THE SPIRIT?

HELLFIRE THERMOCOUPLE

CALORIMETER: 3,000 degrees

THE SPIRIT IS NOT ONLY HIGHLY UNSTABLE, BUT ALSO BOUND *TIGHTLY* WITH ITS HOST.

THE COLLECTION PROCESS IS GOING SLOWER THAN EXPECTED!

IN FACT, AT THIS RATE, FULL SEVERANCE COULD TAKE ***YEARS!***

I'VE LOST TOO MANY YEARS ALREADY.

NOW.

JOHNNY...

...THIS IS GOING TO HURT...

...BUT IT'S TIME.

UGGHHH.

SHOULD I POUR YOU A MUG? OR JUST DUMP THE CARAFE DOWN YOUR THROAT?

HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN OUT?

THREE DAYS.

WHAT?!

@#$%.

EASY THERE.

WHAT HAPPENED?

AT THE DATA CENTER, WE PINPOINTED A SIGNAL. A ***DARK SIGNAL*** TRANSMITTED TO AND FROM DANNY'S HELMET.

THE RIDER TAPPED INTO THE FREQUENCY AND SENT OUT A BLAST TO THE POINT OF ORIGIN.

YOU CERTAINLY GOT THEIR ATTENTION, BECAUSE THEY HIT YOU BACK.

IT WAS LIKE SOMEBODY YANKED THE KEYS OUT OF YOUR IGNITION.

YOU DROPPED TO THE FLOOR.

I'M @#$% STILL THERE.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THE MEANTIME?

YOU... SMELL LIKE ROADKILL.

GET YOURSELF CLEANED UP AND WE'LL TALK ABOUT NEXT STEPS.

YOU KNOW HOW TENDER THE EXPOSED SKIN FEELS AFTER YOU CUT YOUR NAILS TOO TIGHT?

THAT'S HOW MY WHOLE BODY FEELS AFTER THE RIDER POSSESSES ME.

IN A WAY, THAT'S HOW MY *HEART* FEELS NOW THAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT DANNY. ***RAW.***

MY BROTHER IN BLOOD...

...AND *SPIRIT.*

HEY.

I BEEN THINKING...

...AND I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT THIS ONE, JOHNNY.

NOBODY WINS WHEN YOU'RE FIGHTING SOMEBODY YOU LOVE.

SO MOVE THE #$%& OVER--

--AND MAKE THIS COUNT...

...JUST IN CASE WE DON'T GET ANOTHER CHANCE.

INFERNAL LABS.
THREE MONTHS AGO.
HOW ARE YOU DOING, DANIEL?
TANK IS FILLING UP AGAIN, I GUESS.
BUT DAMN, YOU ALL ARE DOING A NUMBER ON ME.
WE ALL KNEW THIS PROCESS WAS GOING TO BE LONG AND DIFFICULT. BUT I KNOW IT WILL BE WORTH IT IN THE END. FOR BOTH OF US.
ABOUT THAT. YOU...MENTIONED YOUR BROTHER BEFORE? THE ONE WHO GOT POSSESSED?
DELUN, YES.
TELL ME MORE ABOUT THAT WHOLE DEAL, WOULD YOU?
WHY?
I'M FEELING COMPLETELY NAKED HERE, SHARING MY DEMONS.
ONLY FAIR YOU SHARE *YOURS.*

"DELUN WENT INTO A BATHROOM AND FOUND A MAN FURIOUSLY WASHING HIS HANDS AT THE SINK.

GOTTA CLEAN IT OFF. GOTTA CLEAN.

GOTTA CLEAN. CAN'T GET CLEAN.

GOTTA CLEAN IT OFF.

CAN'T GET CLEAN BECAUSE IT'S IN ME.

IN ME DEEP.

TOO DEEP TO CLEAN.

-GASP-

GOTTA GET CLEAN.

RATTLE RATTLE

GOTTA GET IT OUT OF ME!

AAAIIEEE!

YOU TAKE IT, BOY! I GOTTA GET CLEAN!!!

"WHEN MY FATHER WENT TO CHECK ON DELUN SEVERAL MINUTES LATER, HE FOUND HIM ALONE IN THE BATHROOM."

DELUN? IS EVERYTHING OKAY?

SPIDER MAN SUCKS!

KIX

GOTTA GET CLEAN.

WHERE WERE *YOU* DURING ALL OF THIS?

I WAS IN MED SCHOOL, STUDYING TO BE AN ONCOLOGIST.

I KNEW EVERYTHING ABOUT CARVING AND POISONING CANCERS OUT OF BODIES, BUT I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING FOR HIM.

WHEN HE DIED...I HAD NEVER FELT SO HELPLESS.

BUT I CHANGED MY COURSE OF STUDY...

...TO THE *SCIENCE* OF DEMONOLOGY.

AND NOW... NOW I CAN HELP YOU, DANIEL.

YEAH? WELL... THANKS. BUT WHO'S HELPING *YOU?*

BECAUSE IT SEEMS LIKE MAYBE YOU'VE GOT SOME...YOU KNOW... UNRESOLVED $#%& GOING ON?

OH, WELL, EVERYTHING WILL BE RESOLVED SOON ENOUGH.

"YOU SEE...I'M GOING TO GET MY BROTHER BACK."

REPAIR CREWS HAVE BEEN WORKING OVERTIME. EVERY CELLULAR NETWORK FOR TWO HUNDRED MILES WAS KNOCKED OUT BY THAT BLAST.

SLEEP LIKE THE DEAD INN

THE DATA CENTER'S LOG REVEALED THE SIGNAL WAS CLOAKED AND TRANSFERRED THROUGH SEVERAL VPN SERVERS.

WE NEVER GOT AN IP ADDRESS. BUT WE GOT A CITY-- MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIFORNIA.

A TECH HUB. AND HOME OF *INFERNAL LABS,* A RESEARCH START-UP DEVOTED TO THE APPLIED SCIENCES OF HELL.

SOUNDS LIKE ANOTHER WORD FOR *WEAPONS.*

YEP.

READY TO SADDLE UP?

MORE THAN READY. CAN'T BELIEVE WE'VE LOST SO MUCH TIME.

THEN HERE YOU GO.

THESE ARE *MOTORCYCLE KEYS.*

NO @#$%?

NO @#$%.

MUCH AS I LOVE YOUR COMPANY, YOU BELONG ON A *BIKE.*

YOU DIDN'T PAY FOR THIS, DID YOU?

NOPE.

NOPE.

DO I EVEN WANT TO KNOW?

TALIA...

DON'T GET SAPPY OR SENTIMENTAL ON ME. IT'S EMBARRASSING.

HELL YEAH.

INFERNAL LABS.
TWO MONTHS AGO.

DAMN IT.

CAN'T YOU JUST IGNORE IT?

RRRING

UNFORTUNATELY, NO.

F.B.I. HEADQUARTERS.
WASHINGTON, DC.

DR. DIYU... WE'VE GOT ANOTHER JOB FOR YOU.

BUT I'M BUSY, DIRECTOR CRUX.

HE'S BUSY.

THIS WAS THE DEAL.

WE KEEP THE LIGHTS ON AT INFERNAL LABS BY FUNDING YOUR LITTLE PROJECTS...

"...SO LONG AS YOU SEND OUT YOUR HUNTING DOG WHEN WE TELL YOU TO."

WE CAN'T SEND HIM OUT LIKE THIS.

WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE.

I'LL DOSE HIM UP WITH ENOUGH *ADRENALINE* TO WAKE THE DEAD.

SHK

GAK!

I FEEL LIKE... I'M GETTING RUBBED AWAY, MAN.

YOU'RE DOING GREAT. JUST HOLD ON A LITTLE LONGER AND YOU CAN REST.

I FEEL LIKE I GOT NOTHING BUT FUMES IN MY TANK, MAN.

I DON'T KNOW...IF I CAN KEEP DOING THIS.

NO...

NO, I DON'T WANT TO.

YOU SIGNED UP FOR THIS EXPERIMENT.

AND WE'RE GOING TO SEE IT THROUGH TO ITS END.

@#$%, MAN... I'M SICK.

CHARGE UP THE REMOTE.

WHERE DO THEY WANT US TO SEND HIM?

THERE'S APPARENTLY A *VAMPIRE* OUTBREAK IN ALASKA.

HOPEFULLY, HE'LL BE IN AND OUT WITHOUT MUCH TIME OR TROUBLE.

ENGAGE.

CLIK

AIIEEEE!

CHK

CHK

UPLOADING COORDINATES AND MISSION AGENDA.

I GET THE FEELING HE HATES US...

THAT'S IRRELEVANT.

OPEN THE BLAST DOORS.

"COME BACK TO US SOON, DANIEL.

"WE HAVE SO MUCH LEFT TO DO."

ALASKA.
ONE MONTH AGO.

PRRRING

SAVANNAH.
TWO WEEKS AGO.

PRRRING

SOUTH CAROLINA.
ONE WEEK AGO.

PRRRING

UNE

KUNCH

CALL UP THE SECURITY CAMERAS FOR THE SOUTH FENCE.

WHY?

BECAUSE I TOLD YOU TO! BECAUSE THEY'RE HERE!

WE KNEW THEY WOULD COME.

AND NOW THE TIME FOR CAUTION AND PATIENCE IS OVER.

WE FINISH THE SEVERANCE NOW.

I DON'T CARE IF IT *KILLS* DANIEL KETCH.

INHABIT MY ARMOR WITH THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT.

OPEN THE GATES OF HELL.

I'M COMING FOR YOU, DELUN.

TO BE CONCLUDED!

SANTA CRUZ, CA.

COME CLOSER...I CAN FULFILL YOUR DESIRES.

JOIN ME, AND TOGETHER, WE WILL REVEL IN ECSTASY.

I WILL MAKE ALL YOUR TROUBLES A DISTANT MEMORY.

COME TO ME, AND I WILL COMFORT YOU.

JOIN ME IN THE QUIET COMFORT OF *DEATH.*

ONE WEEK LATER.

I HEARD ONE OF THE COPS SAY THESE ARE BODIES OF PEOPLE WHO WENT MISSING A WEEK AGO.

DO YOU THINK IT'S A SERIAL KILLER?

HOW MANY MORE BODIES ARE GOING TO WASH UP?

LINE - DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE - DO NOT CROSS PO

EXCUSE ME, OFFICER.

WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

ARE THESE BODIES CONNECTED TO THE DISAPPEARANCES FROM LAST WEEK?

LAST THING WE NEED ARE CIVILIAN DETECTIVES. MOVE ALONG AND LET US DO OUR JOBS.

I FLY ALL THE WAY FROM SOUTH KOREA, JUST TO HIT MORE ROADBLOCKS.

Boardwalk

WHAT'S THIS GUY'S PROBLEM?

STOP

LATER THAT NIGHT...

...NO CAUSE OF DEATH HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED YET, BUT THE PEOPLE OF SANTA CRUZ ARE AFRAID THAT FOUL PLAY WAS INVOLVED.

WE'LL STAY WITH THIS STORY AND REPORT BACK AS SOON AS WE LEARN MORE.

TAE-WON...

WHO'S THERE?

IT'S ME, TAEGUKGI...

...IT'S YOUR OLD BUDDY WRENLEY. DID YOU MISS ME?

AAAH!

THUMP THUMP THUMP

KNOCK KNOCK

HEY, UH, I KNOW SOME RANDOM GUY KNOCKING ON YOUR DOOR AT THE CRACK OF DAWN ISN'T THE BEST FIRST IMPRESSION.

BUT I THINK WE GOT SOME THINGS TO TALK ABOUT.

WHO ARE YOU? WHAT KIND OF GAME ARE YOU PLAYING?

WHOA! I'M HERE TO TALK, NOT TO HAVE AN UNDERWEAR BRAWL. I RECOGNIZED YOU ON THE BOARDWALK. *TAEGUKGI*, RIGHT?

I THINK WE'RE HERE FOR THE SAME REASON.

TALK.

I'M *JOHNNY BLAZE*. I WAS LED HERE BY THE SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE.

OKAY, I KNOW HOW THAT SOUNDS, BUT IT'S THE TRUTH. YOU'RE PART OF *TIGER DIVISION*.

THIS AIN'T SOUTH KOREA, WHICH MAKES ME BELIEVE YOU'RE HERE 'CAUSE YOU KNOW SOMETHING THE REST OF US DON'T.

LOOK, I GET THAT YOU DON'T TRUST ME, BUT I CAN HELP. WHY DON'T YOU PUT ON SOME PANTS, AND I'LL EXPLAIN.

WAIT HERE.

YEAH, PRIVACY. I GET IT.

LATER...

SO, WHO IS THIS GHOST, EXACTLY?

WRENLEY FISCHER. HE LIVED IN SEOUL TWENTY YEARS AGO, BUT SANTA CRUZ WAS HIS HOME. HE WAS A PARTICULARLY TOUGH CRIMINAL FOR US TO CATCH.

TOUGH FOR A GUY WHO'S GOT SUPER-STRENGTH, INVULNERABILITY *AND* FLIGHT? THIS I GOT TO HEAR.

"KICKED OUT OF MED SCHOOL. HE WAS A LITTLE TOO FOND OF CUTTING PEOPLE OPEN.

"HE WORKED FOR BLACK-MARKET DEALERS IN SEOUL. WRENLEY PROVIDED THE HUMAN ORGANS, AND THEY SOLD THEM.

"HE DID HIS DIRTY WORK ON A BOAT, NEVER IN THE SAME PLACE TWICE. I FINALLY TRACKED HIM DOWN AFTER A LONG LIST OF VICTIMS."

THERE WERE 39 VICTIMS, TAE-WON. DON'T LEAVE OUT THE BEST DETAILS.

HE'S HERE.

YEAH, BUT WHERE?

COME ON, LET'S FINISH THE STORY.

"I HAD TWO VICTIMS ON MY BOAT THAT DAY. I WRAPPED THE ANCHOR CHAIN AROUND ONE AND THREW HER OVERBOARD.

"YOU SAVED HER, BUT NOT BEFORE THE OTHER ONE MET THE END OF MY SCALPEL.

"SOMETHING CLUNKED ME ON THE HEAD WHEN YOU DESTROYED MY BOAT, AND I DROWNED. YOU ENJOYED IT, DIDN'T YOU? WATCHING ME DIE."

I COULDN'T SAVE YOU BOTH, WRENLEY, BUT I WANTED YOU TO LIVE. THE FAMILIES OF YOUR VICTIMS DESERVED JUSTICE.

OUT THERE, IN THE WATER!

IT WAS NEVER ABOUT JUSTICE. YOU WANTED *VENGEANCE!* WELL, SO DO I.

DAMMIT, LET GO!

HNGH!

I WANT TO SEE THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE AS I KILL EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THESE PEOPLE. ONE BY ONE.

OR MAYBE *YOU* SHOULD DO THE KILLING.

THERE IS ONLY ONE SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE, WRENLEY FISCHER.

UNF!

STOP THIS BEFORE MORE INNOCENT BLOOD IS SPILLED.

TAEGUKGI CAN'T HEAR YOU, GHOST RIDER. I'M IN CONTROL NOW.

RELEASE HIM!

NO MORE GAMES, FISCHER.

THIS ISN'T OVER BETWEEN YOU AND ME, TAE-WON. I'LL COME BACK AND HAUNT EVERY MINUTE OF YOUR LIFE.

SEND HIM AWAY, RIDER.

AAAAA AAAAH!

SOON...

I'M SORRY I COULDN'T STOP HIM.

WE SAVED A LOT OF LIVES TODAY.

NOT ENOUGH OF THEM.

THAT'S THE KICKER ABOUT THIS LIFE OF OURS. DESPITE ALL THE GOOD THAT WE DO, WE'LL ALWAYS CARRY THE FAILURES IN OUR HEARTS.

THE END.

NEXT ISSUE

Infernal Labs has successfully siphoned the spirit out of Danny Ketch -- in order to power Dr. Diyu's demonic experiments -- and now it's up to Johnny to save his brother and close a fiery portal to Hell before it's too late!

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ZONE